

It has been reported that Mr. Eckstein recently made the additional assertion that I also mentioned campaign contributions from Indian tribes in this context. I have no recollection of doing so or of discussing any such contributions with anyone from the White House, the DNC, or anyone else.

If my letters to Senator McCain and Senator Thompson have caused confusion, then I must and do apologize to them and to the Committee. I certainly had no intention of misleading anyone in either letter. My best recollection of the facts are as I have just stated them.⁶⁵²

Thus, Babbitt in his prepared testimony did not concede that his letters to McCain and Thompson were contradictory, or that either was inaccurate. He further testified that he had not intended to mislead Sen. McCain with the initial letter.

In answer to questions from the Senators, Babbitt testified that his initial denial about having said anything to Eckstein about Ickes's having instructed Babbitt to issue a decision that day, and his subsequent acknowledgment to Sen. Thompson that he probably did say something to Eckstein indicating that Ickes wanted a decision, were both true:

Chairman Thompson: . . . In part of your letter, the last paragraph on the first page, you said, "I must regretfully dispute Mr. Eckstein's assertion that I told him that Mr. Ickes instructed me to issue a decision in this matter without delay." Is that an accurate representation?

Secretary Babbitt: Yes, it is.⁶⁵³

Chairman Thompson: . . . Did you not say that in your testimony earlier that you told Mr. Eckstein that Mr. Ickes wanted you to issue a decision?

⁶⁵²*Id.* at 239.

⁶⁵³*Id.* at 244.